

MICHAEL BUNNING

Lead Game Designer & Narrative Director

Portfolio: www.michael-bunning.co.uk

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Senior game design leader with 13+ years of experience delivering successful AAA and indie titles across console, PC, and VR platforms. Proven track record in leading cross-functional teams, managing full project lifecycles, and creating compelling narrative experiences. Expertise spans system design, level design, and narrative direction, with successful shipped titles including Forza Horizon 4, DmC: Devil May Cry, and Ghostbusters VR.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Game Design: System Design, Level Design, Combat Design, Quest Design
- Technical: Unreal Engine 4/5, Unity, Blueprints, Playmaker, 3ds Max, Adobe Suite
- Leadership: Team Management, Mentoring, Agile/Scrum, Pipeline Development
- Narrative: Story Development, Environmental Storytelling, Dialogue Systems
- Soft Skills: Stakeholder Management, Team Building, Public Speaking

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

LEAD DESIGNER | Soul Assembly Limited

January 2024 - Present **Project: Last Stand (Mixed Reality Multiplayer)**

- Led design team for groundbreaking mixed reality title featuring innovative Inside Out Body Tracking
- Managed full project lifecycle from concept to release within 10-month timeline
- Presented game demo at Gamescom, securing positive press coverage and content creator engagement
- Established and nurtured high-performing team culture, resulting in studio's highest-rated release
- Collaborated with game director on scope management and technical feasibility assessments

SENIOR WRITER & NARRATIVE DESIGNER | Little Red Dog Games

June 2022 - December 2023 **Project: Unannounced Strategy-Action Game**

- Designed and implemented comprehensive narrative systems including dialogue, quests, and tutorials
- Created complete world-building documentation covering factions, geography, and character backgrounds
- Developed and integrated event systems for dynamic storytelling
- Implemented quest content using proprietary tools and engines

PRINCIPAL LEVEL DESIGNER | nDreams

September 2021 - June 2022 **Project: Ghostbusters: Rise of the Ghost Lord**

- Led level design department, establishing workflows and quality standards
- Developed environmental storytelling guidelines and implementation strategies
- Managed recruitment and professional development for level design team
- Created and implemented missions using UE4 Blueprints
- Collaborated on narrative direction and character development

LEAD LEVEL & NARRATIVE DESIGNER | Pixel Toys

December 2018 - September 2021 **Projects: Project Starwarden & Battle Sister**

- Directed narrative design and story development across multiple projects
- Managed level design team through full production cycle
- Established design documentation standards and review processes
- Implemented gameplay systems using Playmaker visual scripting
- Founded studio's equality and diversity steering committee

LEVEL DESIGNER | Playground Games

January 2018 - November 2018 **Project: Forza Horizon 4**

- Created race routes and circuits using proprietary FUEL software
- Developed terrain and road systems using Adobe Mudbox
- Optimised racing routes for maximum player engagement
- Collaborated with technical artists on environment polish

Previous Roles Include:

- **Level Designer** at Codemasters (Micro Machines World Series)
- **Junior Designer** at Ninja Theory (DmC: Devil May Cry, Disney Infinity)

EDUCATION

BA (Hons) English Literature (2:1)

University of Hull, 1999 - 2002

TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY

- **Engines:** Unreal Engine 4/5, Unity
- **Tools:** Blueprints, Playmaker, FUEL, 3ds Max, Adobe Suite
- **Methodologies:** Agile, Scrum, GaaS

SHIPPED TITLES

- Last Stand (2024)
- Ghostbusters: Rise of the Ghost Lord (2023)
- Battle Sister (2021)
- Forza Horizon 4 (2018)
- Micro Machines World Series (2017)
- Disney Infinity 2.0/3.0 (2014)
- DmC: Devil May Cry (2013)